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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 10 titles deal with the following topics: (1) the development of an instrument to assess the communication needs of the community college; (2) the development of a kindergarten through twelfth grade interdisciplinary approach to communication skills; (3) the relationships among organizational communication structures and learning outcomes in college level communication courses; (4) a comparison of computer assisted, audiotaped, and "in vivo" systematic desensitization for the treatment of communication apprehension; (5) the development of criteria for establishing basic oral communication skills programs in elementary schools; (6) a statewide attempt to register and certify Minnesota state high school league speech contest judges; (7) the effects of human relations groups on fourth grade students' self-esteem and communications skills; (8) the effectiveness of student-oriented learning outcomes in a community college introduction to speech communication course; (9) the effects of stress inoculation training and conversation skills training on shy college students; and (10) a developmental communication skills program for Southeast Alaska native students. (FL)

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Speech Communication Education and Classroom Interaction:

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Compiled by the Staff
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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INSTRUMENT TO ASSESS THE COMMUNICATION NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Order No. DA8305153

ANDERSON, BETTY RITCHIE, ED.D. *University of Arkansas*, 1982. 185pp. Major Professor: Dr. James O. Hammons

In any attempt at introducing planned change into organizations such as community colleges, one problem area will be the communication process. In order to reduce this problem, some means of assessing communication is needed. One approach would be to use the dimension found in the literature dealing with communication problems in organizations to develop an instrument to assess the problem.

The purpose of this study was the development of such an instrument, using the Likert method of summated ratings as the basic design. Because this instrument was considered to be an operational definition of the dimensions of communication, care was taken to insure the items accurately reflected the literature.

The procedure included the construction of statements and their validation. Once written, the statements were reviewed to check congruence with the literature. These statements were then critiqued by a small group of people who were either knowledgeable in the community college or organizational communication fields.

After two reviews, this group agreed the instrument contained valid statements which would assess the communication problems of a community college. A pilot study was then conducted in three community colleges to establish the underlying dimensions of the instrument and reduce the number of items contained in the instrument. This was done by the use of factor analysis.

The reduced-statement instrument was administered next in two community colleges thought to differ significantly on the construct. Using a t-test, thirty-three of the seventy-five statements were found to discriminate between the two at the .05 level of significance. In addition, the use of the SPSS reliability program produced an overall ALPHA of .93, with ALPHAs for individual sections of the instrument all above .85, indicating an acceptable level of reliability.

Three major implications were indicated by this study: the instrument developed, or a refined version of it, could be used by community colleges as a diagnostic tool to assess communication needs before implementing planned change in a college; the instrument might serve as a research tool which can contribute to new knowledge in the community college field; and the instrument could be adapted for use in any kind of organization.

APPLICATION OF THEORY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Order No. DA8306471

BEALL, MELISSA LOUISE CHRISTENSEN, PH.D. *The University of Nebraska - Lincoln*, 1982. 254pp. Adviser: John L. Petelle

The need for instructional programs in communication skills has been shown to be a complex process which is necessary for all students. Because of the situational nature of the communication process, there is a need for programs which provide instruction in the development and refinement of skills. Concomitantly, means of assessing skills must be developed. The present study discusses the need for such programs, relates the relevant literature, delineates the steps which went into the development of just such a program, then discusses the formative and impact evaluations of the program.

While the results of this study do not lead to claims of external validity, they do suggest that the instructional program described here is one which will impact students' growth in the achievement of communication skills. The small sample size for comparisons of pre- and post-assessment scores combined with the restrictions placed upon the study by the School District make evaluation difficult but not impossible. The absence of controls in this study was mandated by the School District. An evaluation of the program's effectiveness was run, however, by comparing the pre- and post-assessment scores of 124 students. Comparisons were run only when there were paired data available. The comparisons were highly significant in seventeen of the nineteen skills with one skill being marginally significant and one skill not significant at the .05 level.

Implications for the future, derived from this study, include additional testing to see if the program has generalizability, additional training for teachers in the area of nonverbal communication, testing of the assessment instrument, and tests to determine inter-rater reliability.

THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION STRUCTURES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES IN COLLEGE LEVEL BASIC COMMUNICATION COURSES

Order No. DA8307922

COOK, JOHN ACKLEE, PH.D. *North Texas State University*, 1982. 121pp.

Based on linear models, this study demonstrated that the psychological and social structures of the classroom, viewed as a naturalistic human system, impact learning outcomes.

To operationalize learning outcomes, final grades in the course and a subject self report scale tapping perceptions of utility of material taught were used.

The social and psychological structures of the classroom-as-a-human system were operationalized through the following variables: the degree of social integration of each student, based on network analytic procedures; communication apprehension of students; dimensions of perceived credibility of instructors; dimensions of interpersonal attraction to instructors; perceived satisfaction with task demands of the course; and adjusted orientation to communication, based on communication apprehension scores and network data.

Data were obtained from five sections of a multi-section communication course of a large state institution of higher learning in the southwestern region of the United States. Differences in sex were not found.

Data were analyzed using regression and canonical correlation analyses. While all scales were reliable, three scales had restricted ranges, were negatively skewed, and were leptokurtic. Despite the lack of normality, sufficient confirmation was obtained for relationships posited. The predictor variables accounted for 59.8% of the variance in perceived utility of material taught. The canonical correlation between the predictor variables and the criterion variables was .768. Hence, it was found that a strong relationship exists between the interactive structures of a classroom system and learning outcomes.

The complex regression model to predict final grade was not statistically significant. This was attributed to the fact that 91% of the subjects in this sample received an "A" or a "B" in the course. Recommendations were made to provide more stringent behavioral objectives to more reliably evaluate skills.

The admission of the author is that, while these mathematical models did represent effectively a static prediction of dynamic processes, future research should be focused upon changes over time.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF COMPUTER-ASSISTED, AUDIOTAPED, AND *IN VIVO* SYSTEMATIC DESENSITIZATION FOR THE TREATMENT OF COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION

Order No. DA8229277

HINCHCLIFF, MARY, PH.D. *Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*, 1982. 118pp. Major Professors: Michael G. Parkinson, Marvin D. Kleinau

This document reports the investigation of the individual and comparative effectiveness of three methods of systematic desensitization for the treatment of communication apprehension. A new method of treatment, a computer-assisted program of systematic desensitization developed by the researcher, was tested and proved effective in the reduction of communication apprehension. Two previously documented methods of systematic desensitization, the *in vivo* and audiotaped treatments, were also tested in the reported study. The *in vivo* treatment was proved to be effective and comparable in effect to the computer-assisted treatment. The audiotaped treatment was not proved to be effective in the reduction of communication apprehension. Three statistical tests were employed to analyze the three treatments. First, t-tests were used to evaluate the individual treatments. Second, a one-way analysis of variance was performed to determine the comparative effectiveness of the three treatments. Finally, Scheffé tests were employed to determine the sources and degrees of individual differences in the three treatments. A supplemental questionnaire was employed to generate qualitative data for the investigation. The results generated from the supplemental questionnaire supported the interpretation of the statistical findings.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING BASIC ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAMS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS Order No. DA8228591

KOVALSKI, JOAN P. SULLIVAN, ED D. *University of Virginia*, 1982. 153pp. Adviser: George W. Holmes, III

The Education Amendments of 1978 (P.L. 95-561) reflected an expanded view of what is basic in education. Not only were reading, mathematics, and written communication listed among the basic skills, but also for the first time oral communication. Guidelines, however, were needed for establishing such programs. The purpose of this study was to develop criteria for establishing basic oral communication skills programs in elementary schools and to submit the criteria to a jury of experts in the field of oral communication education for validation.

The literature was reviewed to reveal the recommendations of language and oral communication specialists, psychologists, and curriculum developers regarding basic oral communication skills programs. Program evaluation models were used to focus on aspects of educational programs that are important for decision making.

Fourteen criteria for establishing basic oral communication skills programs in elementary schools were proposed in this study. These fourteen criteria were submitted to a jury of experts in the field of oral communication education for judgment of their importance, clarity, and feasibility. The ratings were treated statistically by analyses of variance tests to determine the degree of consistency and agreement among the jurors.

It was indicated by the test results that the average ratings for importance did not differ significantly from one criterion to the next. All the criteria were considered important for a basic oral communication program.

There was moderate agreement among the jurors regarding the degree of feasibility of the criteria. On the bases of the test results and the suggestions of the jurors, the criteria were revised.

It was noted in the literature and emphasized by the jurors that teachers of basic oral communication skills need to plan learning experiences that emphasize the interactive nature of communication. Educators were advised to consider the total process of communication which included both listening and speaking skills. The proposed criteria and the findings of this study may serve as guidelines for planning basic oral communication skills programs in elementary schools.

A CASE STUDY OF A STATEWIDE ATTEMPT TO REGISTER AND CERTIFY MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE SPEECH CONTEST JUDGES Order No. DA8301985

PALM, PATRICIA JANE ANDERSON, PH.D. *University of Minnesota*, 1982. 318pp.

This paper presents a case study of the implementation phase of an authority innovation-decision of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) to register and certify judges for speech-theatre-debate contests.

The primary research questions which guided the study were (1) What is the meaning of the innovation--the subjective perception of the innovation by the clients? and (2) What are the consequences of the innovation?

Two surveys of two samples of MSHSL judges were conducted over a three-year period of time. The survey data was analyzed and comments subjected to a content analysis procedure.

The study concluded that the meaning of the innovations was different for adopters than for nonadopters.

The meaning of the registration innovation for adopters is vague. Those who did not adopt the registration innovation interpreted it as an attempt on the part of the state to collect more money; as an insult; as an ineffective method of insuring competency; and as unreasonable. Out-of-state judges and college judges were more apt to be nonadopters than were instate or high school judges.

Adopters of the certification innovation saw this innovation as a means of preparing new persons as judges, and as a confirmation of their philosophies and practices of judging. Adopters supported the goals of the certification workshop and tended to evaluate it favorably. Nonadopters viewed the certification innovation as an ineffective attempt to weed competent from incompetent judges; as an impossible effort to train judges in one day; as ignoring previous training and experience; as an insult to competency; as a waste of time and money; and as a mechanism to polarize judges.

Consequences of the innovations were that more high school judges are registered with the MSHSL, that registered judges decreased sharply during the first year of implementation, that the population of judges changed, and that there is a strong resistance to the registration and certification procedures by college judges.

EFFECTS OF HUMAN RELATIONS GROUPS ON FOURTH GRADE CHILDREN'S SELF-ESTEEM AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS Order No. DA8302282

PARKER, M. ELIZABETH MOBLEY, PH.D. *The University of Florida*, 1982. 132pp. Chairman: Harold C. Riker

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of human relations group experiences on fourth grade children's self-esteem and communication skills.

A total of 120 fourth grade children in an elementary school in Alachua County, Florida, was randomly assigned to two experimental and two control groups. Each group was comprised of 30 children. Human relations group experiences were provided for the 60 children in the experimental groups by the researcher, who is the school guidance counselor. The experimental groups met 30 minutes twice a week for eight weeks and received 16 structured activities in human relations. These activities were designed to increase awareness of self and others and to improve communication skills.

The first dependent variable, self-esteem, was measured pre- and posttest by the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI). The second dependent variable, communication skills, was measured pre- and posttest on the Counselor Verbal Response Scale by means of 180 audiotapes which recorded the communications of student dyads role-playing problem-solving situations.

Data analysis showed no significant differences as a result of the human relations group experiences between the experimental and control groups' self-esteem and communication skills in the understanding, specific, and exploratory dimensions. However, there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' affective dimension of communication skills.

In addition, analysis of the data by *t*-test indicated that the experimental groups had a significant gain in scores on self-esteem and communication skills in the affective, understanding, specific, and exploratory dimensions. A correlation coefficient analysis indicated a positive and significant relationship between self-esteem and each dimension of communication skills.

The results of this study indicate that self-esteem and communication skills were improved significantly in fourth grade children by their participation in human relations group experiences. This study also suggests that self-esteem and communication skills are positively related. The implications are that such experiences in the school can significantly improve children's feelings toward themselves and others.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT ORIENTED LEARNING OUTLINES IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE INTRODUCTION TO SPEECH COMMUNICATION COURSE Order No. DA8305099

PREAS, JOHN EDWARD, ED.D. *University of Arkansas*, 1982. 137pp. Major Professor: Dr. James O. Hammons

The large numbers of non-traditional students in community colleges have created a need for change in instructional approaches. Given existing fiscal constraints and the limited time students have to devote to study, any successful instructional strategy must be both cost effective and efficient. This study was conducted in an Introduction to Speech Communication course to test the effectiveness of Student Oriented Learning Outlines (SOLO) in accomplishing these results.

SOLOs are a straightforward means of communicating to the student *what* they are to learn, *how* they can learn it, and how to determine *when* they have learned it. SOLOs accomplish this by giving the student specific learning objectives for a unit of instruction, suggestions for how to achieve the objectives, and the means for determining the extent to which the objectives have been mastered.

The study tested two hypotheses: (H_1) the use of SOLOs will increase student achievement in a community college introductory speech communication course; and (H_2) students will have a positive attitude toward SOLOs.

Procedures. Popham's Interrupted Time Series Design was employed with the only difference in instructional treatment being the use of SOLOs by the experimental groups.

Achievement by students was determined by performance on four unit tests and a comprehensive final examination. Student attitudes toward the course and the SOLO concept were measured by the use of course evaluation and SOLO evaluation forms.

Results. All students who completed the course expressed a favorable attitude toward the course in general, and toward the use of SOLOs in particular, on both the course and SOLO evaluation forms.

This positive reaction, however, did not always translate into increased achievement for the experimental group. The same two sections consistently performed better on tests than the other two sections, even when functioning as control group. The same results were achieved on the cumulative final.

Conclusions. With no change in course content, and SOLOs as the only change in course structure, student attitude toward the course showed a definite improvement. However, this improved attitude did not translate into improved student achievement.

THE EFFECTS OF STRESS INOCULATION TRAINING AND CONVERSATION SKILLS TRAINING ON SHY (COMMUNICATION-APPREHENSIVE) COLLEGE STUDENTS

Order No. DA83[illegible]2299

SELLERS, JAMES E., PH.D. *The University of Florida*, 1982. 153p. Chairman: Larry Loesch

The purpose of this study was to measure the treatment effects of two group counseling strategies, each of which employs distinctive techniques for the amelioration of the negative effects of shyness, specifically, communication-apprehension in socially anxious college students. The effects of stress inoculation training, cognitive-behavioral intervention, were compared to the effects of communication skills training, a social skills intervention, using no-treatment control group.

The results of this study revealed that the shy individuals in the two treatment groups became less socially apprehensive, less likely to avoid social situations, and less anxious in social situations requiring interpersonal communication when compared to the no-treatment control group. Both treatment groups made significant changes on the Social Avoidance and Distress Scale. The results on the Social Interaction and Self-Statement Test were not conclusive when compared to the no-treatment control group. Neither the conversation skills training group nor the stress inoculation training group reported significant decreases in their negative cognitions regarding interpersonal communication.

This dissertation acquaints the reader with a review of the relevant literature on shyness from the counseling and psychological perspectives and the communication studies perspective. Conclusions based on the outcome of the research are offered. Implications for the counseling profession and for continued research are also offered.

DESIGN OF A DEVELOPMENTAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAM FOR SOUTHEAST ALASKA NATIVE COLLEGE STUDENTS

Order No. DA8304429

WAUTERS, JOAN KATHERINE, A.D. *The University of Michigan*, 1982. 282pp. Chairman: Daniel Fader

Native Americans have long had the highest college attrition rate of any minority group in higher education. This study describes efforts to design an effective developmental program at the University of Alaska, Juneau, to help Native college students, primarily Tlingit and Haida Indians, succeed in college.

Inadequate academic preparation is one cause of Native American failure at the college level, but this circumstance alone does not explain the dropout rate. Cultural conflict between traditional Indian values and the values of the dominant society also plays an important role in the alienation of Indian students from higher education, as does institutional bias against minorities. Current types of special services designed to resolve these difficulties are examined, including Indian-run colleges, Native Study programs, and developmental programs.

Awareness of student audience is a primary factor to consider when planning a special services program for minorities. Research on cognitive styles indicates that Native American students favor more holistic and less formal learning approaches than those of white students. Native American styles of learning and communicating, together with personality characteristics of specific groups of Native Americans, should determine both instructional activities and pedagogical approach in developmental programs.

The final chapters describe the steps taken to determine Native student needs at the University of Alaska, Juneau, and a program model to serve these students is proposed. Results of a pilot course in college English skills using Alaska Native topics and materials are discussed in relation to further program recommendations. The student-centered developmental model proposed is a semester-long comprehensive program in communication and study skills, which stresses the cognitive strengths of Southeast Alaska Native students. The program would offer a special orientation course covering topics such as intercultural communication and university procedures and would also feature a structured network of relationships among students, staff, and faculty to provide students with needed psychological and social support.

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